AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend paragraphs [0025]-[0027] as follows:

[0025] FIG. 1 illustrates a metadata exchange strategy framework 102 in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. Metadata exchange strategy framework 102 includes metadata change manager 110, metadata exchange strategy 112, and execution engine 114. Metadata change manager 110 provides functions for creating difference reports, such as difference report ~~108~~111, as described below in conjunction with FIGs. 2, 3, 5, and 8. Metadata exchange strategy 112 provides functions for creating an action plan, such as action plan 113, as described below in conjunction with FIG. 4, 6, 7, and 8. Execution engine 114 provides functions for executing the action plan as described below in conjunctions with FIGs. 4 ~~and 8~~and 8.

[0026] Metadata exchange strategy framework 102 accepts source object 104 and target object 106 and creates merged object 108. Source object 104, target object 106, and merged object 108 contain metadata describing respective database objects. Source object 104 and target object ~~108~~106 are descriptions of the same database object that differ, possibly because their metadata definition may have been updated or customized by different users.

[0027] Source object ~~102~~104 and target object 106 are typically Oracle database objects and not just tables and columns (i.e. cubes, transformations, and the like). Also source object ~~102~~104 and target object 106 may include other objects such as files in a file system or records in a file that have been captured using UML and stored in the database during design time. This is typically achieved by having a table called "file" and a table called "record." The metadata of ~~ext6ernal~~external table objects refers to the record metadata in the record table. These are not database objects, but still dictate the structure of some database objects. For ~~example~~example, the structure of an external table is dictated by the

2